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Disciples

Missionary Education Department

The United Christian Missionary Society

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A F R I C A

T H E B E L G I A N C O N G O

In November, 1953, a revered pioneer missionary returned for a visit to the Belgian Congo, in Central Africa. At the dedication of the church which bears his name at Bolenge, he was greeted by Congolese friends who remembered him well, although they had not seen him for forty-two years. It was Dr. Royal J. Dye, known to Disciples of Christ as "Mr. Missions." In 1899, Dr. Dye, with his bride, carried with him to the Belgian Congo papers transferring from the American Baptist Missionary Society to the Foreign Christian Missionary Society the property of the Bolenge station which was the beginning of our mission in Central Africa. Awaiting them was Mr. Ellsworth Faris, who with another pioneer missionary, Dr. Henry N. Biddle, had left the States more than two years before with instructions to find a site for establishing a mission in Central Africa. The long, difficult journey brought death from tropical diseases to the young physician, and to Mr. Faris, months of weary, anxious waiting for the arrival of the Dyes and the authority to begin the work at the station.

The more than fifty years have brought great changes. Bolenge is today a thriving center of missionary activities, with its strong church and school program, its hospital, its mission press which furnishes printed materials to our own mission and those of other communions. Adjoining Bolenge are Congo Christian Institute, the training school for teachers, and the Preachers School, training school for evangelists. About six miles away, on the south side of the mighty Congo River, where it is joined by the Ruki River, the only urban work of the mission is carried on in the crowded city of Coquilhatville, capital of the province of the Equator and headquarters for commercial and government activities of the area. For a number of years, this has been the administrative center of the mission, with its offices of the treasurer and legal representative. The church at Coquilhatville is a thriving one. It maintains three to five afternoon Sunday schools in the various sections of the city.

On the two great branches of the Ruki River are located other stations-- Lotumbe and Ifumo, on the Momboyo; Monieka on the Busira. Along the banks of the Tshuapa, tributary of the Busira, missionaries have pushed their way deeper and deeper into the jungles to establish work in remote Mondombe and primitive Wema. Rivers are the great highways. At Bolenge, the Congo is seven miles wide. During the years, roads have been built to keep pace with the march of industrial progress; planes are seen flying even over backcountry, but in most places the rivers still carry the major part of traffic, and to the Congolese, the river is the very center of life.

Churches and Evangelism

The spark of evangelism caught fire slowly in the mission field opened in 1899. Hampered by language difficulties, the missionaries fought discouragement as they labored to bring the light of the gospel to minds steeped in superstition and witchcraft. People came fearfully into that first little thatched roofed church at Bolenge; it was not until 1902 that a small baptismal service was held.

From that beginning, the church in Congo has grown until there are now almost 85,000 members. Evangelists, trained in the mission schools and churches, returned to their own villages to become pastors of new congregations. Soon trips "into the bush" became a part of the routine duties of a missionary, and the arrival of

the white preacher is today awaited eagerly in hundreds of crude huts which serve as church buildings in backcountry. A station may have supervision of more than 300 villages. Weeks are devoted to these trips, as the missionary, sometimes alone, sometimes with another missionary or the Congolese pastor from the station, goes from village to village in the jungle. There he works with the Congolese pastor, instructing and examining those who wish to become church members, helping with the offerings and records. Often he or she must act as judge, dispensing wisdom as problems and disputes are brought to him to be settled. With a renewed sense of the magnitude of the native pastor's task, he gives advice and spiritual guidance for the months ahead. The climax of every visit comes on Sunday morning, when the baptism of inquirers who have passed examinations is held by the village pastor in the stream nearest the village.

Other consecrated men and women are trained to become elders, deacons, deaconesses and to serve as teachers of Sunday school classes. Stewardship is taught, as offerings of money as well as household goods are received from children and adults. All told, out of its very low economy, the church of Congo gives more than \$25,000 yearly toward its own support.

Work with youth groups is adapted to fill the needs of widely differing areas. Foremost in current problems are the industrial changes which have taken youth from the isolation of jungle villages and placed him in overcrowded cities with all the attending complexities of city life to confuse and tempt him. Many leave school for a job in the city, but there are stories told by missionaries of young men who make sacrifices to preach or teach in remote villages instead of seeking more lucrative employment with the government. One missionary reported that at an evening youth meeting in Ifumo, five school boys stepped out saying that they would like to be preachers of the gospel.

Conferences and retreats for youth as well as adults at Longa, on the Momboyo River, the second mission station to be established by the Disciples of Christ Congo Mission. Because of its proximity to Bolenge, where the original missionary residence and church were located, Longa was abandoned as a real mission station. Because of the memories of beloved pioneer missionaries who lived and worked there, and also because of its location, being accessible to all our stations by land or river, it was considered an ideal spot for conferences. New buildings were erected, and the first retreat was held in 1952.

Education

The Belgian Government gives to the missions in the Belgian Congo full responsibility for educating the Congolese. Schools which meet government standards are subsidized. The State Department of Education sets very high standards; one of the requirements is that every non-Belgian missionary, to qualify to teach in a school in Congo that is officially recognized and aided must spend at least one year in Belgium in the study of the French language and approved methods of education. State control, however, does not interfere in any way with religious teaching in the schools. One period in each day is devoted to a class in religion which may be taught in any way and with any materials which the mission may choose.

There are more than 10,000 pupils in the close to three hundred schools of our Mission. These schools range in size and equipment from the tiniest primary school in remote jungle villages, where not more than two grades may be taught, to Congo Christian Institute. Those who have learned to read and write in the village or bush schools study usually at the regional schools for a year or so

before entering school in the mission stations, where six years is the rule. Girls have entered reluctantly into the educational picture, although the years have brought greater participation. Usually it has been found necessary to have separate classes for them, where Bible study, handwork, lessons in homemaking and gardening are taught, and entered into with eagerness. In every station there is a girls' dormitory as well as one for boys.

Supervision of the village and regional schools is given by the missionary teachers. As frequently as possible, these missionaries make itinerations into backcountry to see the work being done in remote villages by graduates of mission schools, to pay salaries, and to give advice and instruction. Again, there are ingatherings of teachers - institutes where demonstrations of new methods and materials and discussions of problems bring mutual aid.

At Bolenge, a secondary school gives instruction to promising students wishing training to become clerks, typists, and to fill other clerical positions. The government specifies that the teaching must all be in French.

Congo Christian Institute meets a great need for the preparation of teachers with ability to conduct schools meeting requirements of the State Department of Education. This need for a training school was recognized early in the history of the mission, and the work was begun in 1928. Its three year course included such subjects on the high school level as the Old and New Testaments, science, geography, agriculture, education, Congo Belge history, native customs and culture, music, French, church history, and mathematics. Students brought their wives and children and classes were planned for them as well as for the men students. To each little family was given a garden plot and wives were taught ways of cooking vegetables new in their experience. Later a Practice School for teachers was added. In 1948 the course of study was extended to four years. In January, 1953, a secondary school for pastors was opened, the beginning of plans for the future, of a seminary for advance training of church leadership. These men also bring their wives and families. The wives have classes in crafts, home management, and Bible. About ninety students were enrolled in ministerial training in 1955.

In 1949, Congo Christian Institute became a cooperative school, when the Ubangi Evangelical Mission brought students and teachers to share in its program. The following year the Swedish Baptist Mission also joined forces, and in 1954, the Regions Beyond Missionary Union of London, became a part of the Institute. With the four missions working together in this way, the future of the institute is well assured.

Medicine

Our skilled, consecrated doctors and nurses in Congo have worked through the years against the odds of lack of equipment and personnel equal to meet overwhelming needs presented to them. It is true that the medical picture of Africa is changing, and there are more and larger government hospitals being built. But countless numbers who live in the remote sections must depend on the mission hospitals and dispensaries. So doctors have from the beginning worked without facilities which they have been trained to consider indispensable- many times operating by lantern light. Even now that electricity is available, the direction "Hold that flashlight steady" is heard all too frequently because lights have failed. Patients are housed in mud huts, two in a room six by eight feet. Doctors remove their surgical gloves to help make bricks for new buildings or repair the roof of an old one. In remote Ifumo, a lone nurse attempts to help

scores of persons who crowd into her two-room clinic, with equipment which a medical missionary describes as "appallingly poor and insufficient."

Today, there are hospitals in eleven stations: Bolenge, Lotumbe, Monieka, Mondombe, and Wema. These, with eight dispensaries, are giving approximately 750,000 treatments each year. In spite of difficulties and discouragements, a health program has been maintained through clinics and classes in schools, which has made a surprising advance against superstition and fear imposed by witch doctors.

An important part of every doctor's and nurse's job has been the training of medical assistants, and many of these have been invaluable as helpers in hospitals, dispensaries, and clinics. It is only through their contribution that the medical missionaries have been able to accomplish their significant success in alleviating suffering and combating disease.

The greatest hope for the future of our program of health education in Congo lies in the cooperative work at the Kimpese Medical Institute for Higher Medical Training, to which our mission contributes budget support and personnel. Here we may send promising youth to be trained as nurses, nurses aids, and midwives. Unfortunately, this institution also is hampered by lack of adequate personnel.

The medical staffs at Mondombe, Lotumbe, and Wema maintain leper colonies near the stations where cures are effected and those afflicted are helped to lead as nearly as possible, a useful, normal life. In each of the leprosaria there is a school, a church with a Congolese in charge. Wherever possible, opportunities are provided for making a living by the sale of garden products and handcraft, for which a market is found.

The Press

The press at Bolenge has long been an important part of our Congo Mission. Today at Congo Christian Institute, the little foot-power press in use before 1900 is kept as a museum piece - eloquent testimony of the efforts of pioneer missionaries to place in the hands of the Congolese the Word in their language. Modern, electrical machines have replaced it, but even they have not been able to supply the demand for the printed page. In one year, more than 4,000,000 pages of educational and Christian literature were printed. Testaments, textbooks, hymnals, a quarterly journal were printed in the Lonkundo language, and distributed, not only in our own schools and churches, but in towns from the sea coast on the west to the hills on the east side of Congo. 47,000 copies of books in the Lingala language were ordered in one year by government military schools, missions of other communions, and the Salvation Army.

The Disciples of Christ Mission also has a share in the cooperatively owned Union Press and Book Store, called LECO, of the Congo Protestant Council. This vital Protestant enterprise is located in Leopoldville,

Other Cooperative Enterprises

Also at Leopoldville is the Union Mission House of the Congo Protestant Council. The Disciples of Christ Congo Mission was one of six missions to establish this much needed hostel.

In Brussels, the Office of Congo Protestant Missions in Belgium renders invaluable help to our educational and medical missionaries studying for service in

the Belgian Congo. It is called the Brussels Bureau, and it is supported by the mission boards cooperating in the Africa Committee of the Foreign Division of the National Council of Churches.

S O U T H A F R I C A

Disciples of Christ in South Africa are said to exert an influence which is out of all proportion to their relatively small size. Until recently our relationship there has been with only six churches which have been active in the work of the brotherhood. Comprised mostly of people of British and Dutch descent, they are located in Capetown, Johannesburg, Brakpan, Benoni, Germiston, and Boksburg, all in the extreme southern part of Africa, in the community of Witwatersrand. In 1946, The United Christian Missionary Society answered a request from these scattered churches for help in securing better trained ministers and more adequate buildings, as well as other benefits which come from organized fellowship.

To aid in carrying out this important work, a native South African minister who had been preaching in the United States for seventeen years was sent as a representative. He became minister of the Linden Church at Johannesburg and also began a program of assistance to the other five churches. In 1955 this representative visited America to attend the World Convention of Churches in Toronto.

In this same year, work began on a new church and parsonage, described as a home mission project of the Disciples of Christ churches in South Africa. Located in Orlando, near Johannesburg, it is the first Disciples of Christ church for native Bantu Christians. Orlando is the largest township in South Africa. Its population is made up of Europeans, Africans (full-blooded Negroes), and "colored" (people with a mixture of white and Negro blood.) The first contribution toward the building fund came from a colored unemployed school teacher attending an interracial meeting where our representative was the speaker. Larger sums came from churches in South Africa and America. With aid from The United Christian Missionary Society the fund was increased and the church was able to open its doors debt free, in April, 1956.

Our churches in South Africa have taken the leadership in the establishment of the All-Southern Convention of the Disciples of Christ in Africa, which has as its purpose to bring into fellowship all Disciples in southern Africa. At the first meeting in 1954, delegates were present from our mission in the Belgian Congo, the British Churches of Christ Mission in Nyasaland, and the New Zealand Churches of Christ Mission in Southern Rhodesia. The convention will meet every four years. Our representative reported that the most stirring aspect of the convention was its interracial flavor. At the closing communion service, the Linden Church was filled with an equal proportion of white and black Disciples.

An important phase of the work in South Africa is the publishing of a quarterly magazine entitled The South African Sentinel, which has as its purpose to promote religious and social welfare in South and Central Africa. On its pages may be found news of churches in South Africa, and abroad, as well as addresses of pastors and other religious leaders.

Disciples of Christ in South Africa work with other churches in the Christian Council of South Africa, an organization similar to our National Council of Churches in the United States of America. They are also affiliated with such organizations as the Christian Education Movement of Southern Africa, and the South African Institute of Race Relations.

Of great importance to the work of Disciples in South Africa was the establishment of the Peter Ainslie Memorial Lectureship on Christian unity, sponsored by Rhodes University, and supported by the Council of Christian Unity of Disciples in the United States. Lectures are given annually, formerly at Rhodes University, but now they are being rotated among the four South African universities.

Significant news of 1956 includes the commissioning of a missionary couple by The United Christian Missionary Society to serve at the church at Boksburg, a city of 53,000 people near Johannesburg.

Also of interest is the news that a scholarship was granted to a young member of the Linden Church in Johannesburg to study for the ministry in the United States. This young ministerial student entered Phillips University in August, 1956. When he has completed his training, he will serve one of the churches in South Africa.

I N D I A

Mission Stations

Our Mission in India is doing work in nine different mission stations in Madhya Pradesh, formerly known to us as the Central Provinces. Beginning in the north and running toward the south they are as follows: Damoh, Jabalpur, Pendra Road, Kotmi, Kotah, Bilaspur, Takhatpur, Mungeli, and Fosterpur. In Harda, Mahoba, and Jhansi are loyal Disciples of Christ churches planted and developed during earlier years when the India Mission was extended over a larger area. In 1952, two Disciples of Christ missionaries were stationed in the West Utkal area of Orissa, southeast of our work in the central provinces. In 1954, a new central mission station was developed in Diptipur, in this same area. In 1956, five Disciples of Christ missionary families are in residence in Orissa.

A mission station is a central location where either a missionary or an Indian trained for the work, and called a "person in charge," manages the mission work that is carried on in that center. In each of the centers there is a church, in most of them there is at least one school, and in some of them there is a hospital. In addition to these mission stations we have thirty-six out-stations to which missionaries or nationals go regularly to conduct services and to carry on missionary activities. The population of the area in which we work is 1,326,787. We have 50 missionaries and 332 nationals at work in this area.

Madhya Pradesh

Churches

There are 31 churches in the area of the Mission in Madhya Pradesh, and 61 places where regular services are being held, including the 31 organized churches. The total membership of the churches is 3,547. We have 51 Bible schools in the area with a total enrollment of 2,136.

Churches in India contribute to the support of other churches at home and abroad. Special days are observed, when the program and the offerings are devoted to home missions or foreign missions. Young Indian Christians have many days of "Thanksgiving" when an offering is made in gratitude for blessings received—perhaps for success in passing a difficult examination or recovery from illness.

A grand total of \$128,930 was raised on the field last year(1955). Of this, \$6,933 was contributions from nationals. The rest came from hospitals, schools, and other sources. The total amount was spent on the work in India, in addition to money sent from the United States.

Evangelistic Work in Villages

Evangelism has been heretofore almost exclusively the concern of the mission, which has employed evangelists and Bible women under the direction of evangelistic missionaries. A shift is taking place now in the direction of local churches taking evangelistic responsibility in their immediate neighborhood. In the future, evangelism will be increasingly a function of the churches, with laymen engaging in the outreach which employed evangelistic workers have formerly made for the most part. All evangelistic work is now supervised by a Committee of Twelve, which includes all nationals and pastors.

Of course all of the established churches in India are centers of evangelism but in addition to the evangelistic work done in the churches regular work is done in the villages surrounding the central stations. The never-ceasing telling of the good news goes on, with missionaries and native evangelists using the latest methods, along with the old familiar and much loved method of singing the gospel stories. The public address system is used whenever possible, as the numbers who come make this audio-visual aid necessary. At one large camp, for instance, there were capacity crowds from all castes. A portable generator, purchased from Army surplus supplies, was used to light the camp and to furnish power for a movie and slide projector. The meeting was opened with a story told in Indian fashion- by singing and chanting. Indian Christian songs followed, with words and music written by Indians. After a slide presentation with commentary, the same story was sung according to the Indian fashion, accompanied by feltograph presentations and audio-visual aids, using movies, filmstrips, and slides.

In addition to these established methods of outreach in the villages, two cooperative undertakings are well under way which carry on a program of uplift for people who live in villages near mission stations. These are known as The Abundant Life project, launched at Takhatpur in 1953, and the Star of Life project which began at Damoh late in 1954. In both programs, the area was explored and various villages chosen for intensive demonstration. Literacy classes are conducted, using the colorful posters and charts, the each-one-teach-one method of Dr. Frank Laubach; films and other audio-visuals show the importance of sanitation to the health of the family. The program of economic uplift is related mainly to farming. Graduates of Allahabad Agricultural Institute add to their teaching the demonstrations of better farming by means of selected seeds and improved but simple implements.

Exhibitions and social education fairs encourage effort in the villages. At a one-day fair over a thousand exhibits of grains, vegetables, fruit, poultry, cattle, and handwork were reported, and more than 8000 people attended.

Capable Christian men and women in the villages are given leadership training in order that they may extend the work deeper into rural areas. These village-level workers, known as Gaon Sathees (village companions), carefully trained, serve as counselors whose responsibility is to organize demonstrations, project literacy classes, set up local leadership councils, and to incarnate in every way possible the spirit of the Star of Life and the Abundant Life programs. Both these programs are financed by special funds. They will terminate in five years.

Schools

We have fifteen schools of all grades with an enrollment of 2,685. Seventeen of the students are studying for the Christian ministry.

We have one high school for girls in Bilaspur and two high schools for boys, one in Bilaspur and one in Jabalpur. This last is maintained jointly with the Methodists. We have five middle schools (upper primary) and eight primary schools in our regular educational set-up. In addition at Sumankhetan, which means "field of flowers" in Pendra Road, we have a school for girls which is geared into the village life of the people and trains the young women for Christian life within their villages. Burgess Memorial School for Girls is of high school standing plus

a middle school in preparation for high school. There is a boarding department where girls are housed. They prepare for such vocations as teaching, homemaking, and Christian living. An intermediate college has been instituted by adding two additional grades to the high school, graduates of which may continue college level work at Burgess.

In a letter from the principal, the social service program is described as "a concrete expression of our school motto 'We receive to give.'" She writes: "Both staff and students have entered into this work with enthusiasm. Any Sunday morning about ten o'clock you will see groups of girls going along the road to different villages carrying buckets, towels, soap, and other necessities. Some of the projects carried out are: teaching villagers how to read and write, teaching the women and girls how to sew, teaching them songs, Bible verses, and stories with the aid of pictures and feltographs, entertaining the children with games, visiting homes, and teaching rules of hygiene and sanitation. We give our colored Bible pictures as very special prizes. Each year we have a special Christmas program when the girls bring gifts to be used in this village work. In their own communities, the girls go out to nearby villages on Sunday before Christmas and share with their village friends the gifts and Christmas story."

The principal of the boys' high school in Bilaspur received his master's degree from Texas Christian University in 1949. This high school has developed remarkably across the last few years.

There are 101 girls enrolled in Sumankhetan's middle school and 90 are in the boarding department. The school remains very popular both as a practical training school for life in the villages and as a pre-nursing school. The Home Science Practice House is operated for the special class in home management, the girls learning to buy, prepare, and serve Indian foods, and to carry on regular house work. As laboratory experience in child care, the girls assist in the community nursery. Because of the importance to the home of better gardens, the girls are given practice in tending the school garden.

In 1954 Woodstock School, maintained cooperatively by Boards of Missions in Madhya Pradesh, celebrated its centennial. Established originally in the mountain region near Landour for children of missionaries, it includes today in its student body sons and daughters of leading Indian families. Children of the American embassy also take advantage of its excellent school program, and there are refugees from Europe enrolled too. So many nationalities are represented that Woodstock is sometimes called "a little United Nations." In connection with Woodstock is a union hospital to which Disciples make an annual grant, and on occasion contribute the services of a missionary.

Disciples also share in the work being done in the Allahabad Agricultural Institute, by making an annual financial contribution and by appointing a member to the managing committee. A trained agricultural extension agent from the institute lives in the mission headquarters at Takhatpur and serves not only the villages, but the entire mission.

We are represented on the board of managers of Leonard Theological College, which is in Jabalpur. A number of Disciples youth attend this college in preparation for the ministry. Students return to home churches during vacations, and take an active part in church work, especially in young peoples conferences.

The Mission Press

The Mission Press, operated by Disciples of Christ at Jabalpur, is the only one in all Madhya Pradesh which prints Christian literature. For more than forty years a tremendous output has been going out, not only to our own churches and schools, but also to missions, missionaries, and churches of other communions. Dr. Frank Laubach's book India Shall Be Literate was printed there, as well as many primers and other materials used in the all-India literacy campaign. A weekly paper started at the Mission Press many years ago is said to be the only newspaper read by many Christians of many denominations. So widely has it been circulated that other missions have joined in supporting it, not only financially, but by providing writers.

Hospitals

We have 5 hospitals in Madhya Pradesh, located at Damoh, Pendra Road, Bilaspur, Takhatpur, and Mungeli. There is a dispensary at Kotah, which serves a large village area under the supervision of an able Indian physician. Last year these hospitals gave a total of 106,929 treatments. Our largest hospitals are at Bilaspur and Mungeli. Jackman Memorial Hospital at Bilaspur specializes in diseases of women and girls, though it does a general service for the community. There are 43 young women enrolled at our nurses' training school there, including a number from other missions. The hospital at Mungeli specializes in eye operative work though it, too, engages in general surgery. It is completely electrified, and the only radium in any hospital in this part of India is in use here. Our Mission established the Pendra Road Sanitorium for tubercular persons. Although our missionaries and Indian Christian colleagues are represented on the staff and governing body, the institution is now a union enterprise.

Hundreds of blind and near-blind persons are made to see through eye camps which have been developed by one of our missionary doctors and his colleagues at Mungeli Hospital and at Vellore Christian Medical College in South India. These camps are set up far from the mission hospital to which many victims of eye diseases cannot come. "Assembly line" methods save time and make possible dozens of cataract and other operations for vision defects, as well as treatments of other ailments in simultaneous roadside clinics.

The lives of several hundred people from a dozen or more villages are touched by the gospel of Christian love and healing. In the evening the Christian message is given to patients and relatives, who attend and feed them, by Christian workers who make the camp an evangelistic occasion as well. Doctors and nurses are whole-hearted in encouraging the Christian testimony through song and teaching and prayer.

The medical service to India's poor and blind can be offered at an amazingly low cost. A blind person may have his sight restored through this eye-camp ministry for what we Americans pay for a man's hat or a pair of woman's shoes, or gasoline for a week-end trip. In addition to medical ministry, there is now a special training program for blind children added to the regular school program in Mungeli.

Youth Conferences and Camps

Conferences have been enthusiastically received by youth in India. Program materials used in America, when translated into Hindi, have added inspiration in

the beauty of jungle settings. The India Mission began young peoples' conference work on modern lines in Mungeli in 1940. Graduates of the first conferences there organized a young adult conference in 1954. In 1950 Character Bond money given in conferences in America helped provide transportation to a most successful conference held on a river bank in the jungle fourteen miles from Damoh. The first camp for intermediates was held there in 1952. The conference program in the Chattisgarh area inspired the young people of Pendra Road to organize a youth fellowship in their home community. One of their first service projects was to help organize a community center library, with a daily recreation program.

The "Regions Beyond"

"Regions Beyond" is the name used to describe new frontiers entered by Disciples of Christ in India. This is a common term within India Mission circles, and has come to represent the Macedonian frontier wherever it beckons to courageous and imaginative witnesses for Christ. In this instance, doors of great opportunity have been opened by a cooperative venture with the British Churches of Christ Mission in Surguja and the British Baptist Mission in Orissa.

Surguja

Surguja is located to the northeast of the Madhya Pradesh, between that area and Bihar state, where the British Churches of Christ mission is established. Budget support has been given to enable missionaries to go from Bihar across the border into Surguja to carry on a program of evangelism, education, and medical aid. A large number of baptisms have resulted; primary schools and literacy classes are conducted; a small dispensary renders effective treatments.

Orissa

Orissa, situated to the southeast of our Mission in Madhya Pradesh, is the second of the "Regions Beyond." The British Baptist Mission has been doing educational and evangelistic work there for nearly fifty years. Their great need is for additional workers and equipment which British churches have not been able to provide. In 1953 a missionary family was moved from their station in the Chhattisgarh area in the central provinces to work in Sambalpur in a region where there were more than ten thousand humble Christians scattered in some three hundred villages. In the first fifteen months over one thousand new Christians were baptized, and twenty-six new villages were opened to the Gospel. Five missionary families have now been deployed to Orissa, three of whom were commissioned with Orissa as their destination, with the other two transferred from the Central Provinces.

A central station called Diptipur (Village of Light), in the Bargarh district has been established. Here a middle and boarding school, hospital, missionary residences, and other station facilities have been developed. A new outstation at Sirgiri, north of Diptipur, is being planned. One of the immediate needs is for education. The majority of the folk are illiterate. There has been only one middle school, for fifth through eighth grades, in an area of almost eight thousand miles.

The British Baptists and American Disciples have agreed to jointly occupy the several mission stations of West Utkal, thus avoiding partisan labors for work

which demonstrates both fellowship and evangelistic fruits.

In 1956, for the third year, a series of successful youth camps was held, one for each of the three district church areas of West Utkal. It is felt that they meet a very real need in the area in the training of future church leaders.

Nepal

The United Christian Mission to Nepal, supervised by eight or ten missions and churches, is one that is rapidly growing.

The story of Christianity in Nepal reads, in the words of an article in the March, 1956, issue of World Call, "like a drama of excellent fiction." "The very locations of the little mountain kingdom in the high Himalayas between India and Tibet has given Nepal the popular name of 'Shangri-La,'" continues the article. From the year 1769 until 1950 neither Christians nor many other visitors were permitted to enter the country. Then a Nepali revolt overthrew the ruling family, and the new regime adopted a more encouraging attitude toward foreigners.

In 1950, a team of scientists including two Protestant missionaries, went into the country in search of rare bird specimens. The missionaries, especially, were appalled at the need of the people in the mountain villages for medical care and health education. When they began to give on-the-spot treatments, they were besieged by those in need.

Later, a conference of missionaries and government officials resulted in the granting of permission to carry on medical work and to provide medical training for young Nepali personnel. There is a government regulation against public preaching, but medical workers may talk to individuals about Christianity in the clinics and in the homes.

In its first year of operation, the United Christian Mission gave more than 2,200 treatments including surgery in the hospital at Katmandu and 3,200 out-patient treatments in the hospital at Tansen. Five field clinics were set up in which more than 34,000 minor operations and other treatments were provided.

After the first exploration trip by missionaries from the Disciples of Christ Mission in India, one of our own nurses spent six weeks in Nepal to give relief to some of the regular nursing staff who had been on duty there. In December, 1955, a Disciples nurse arrived in Katmandu to begin full-time staff participation.

The United Mission is considered to be a temporary organization which will function only until the Christian church in Nepal can become strong enough to carry responsibility for the program. At this time it is gaining strength, not only in the number of nations from which helpers come, but also in the number of Christian groups lending a hand, and in the various types of work that are acceptable.

J A P A N

More than seventy years ago, in 1883, the first Disciples of Christ missionaries to Japan sailed from San Francisco, and six weeks later reached Yokohama. After much deliberation and conference with missionaries of other communions, they chose the city of Akita, about 400 miles north of Tokyo, as the setting of our first missionary endeavor in this land of non-Christian religions. Less than a year later, a convert was baptized.

Before World War II, the Japanese Empire was made up of nearly 4,000 islands, but many of them are exceedingly small and unimportant. Most of the principal cities are on the main island of Honshu, and it is here that our missionary work has been located. Through the centuries, millions of people have been adherents of the religion of Shintoism, but the war shook the confidence of many in that faith. In the sixth century, Buddhism entered the religious history of the country and gathered great strength through the years. However, Buddhism also suffered desertions during the war. Although the return of political independence in 1952 was accompanied by a revival of these two dominant religions, the resurgence had very little effect upon Christianity. In fact, our congregations have shown a slight, but unmistakable gain in numbers in the last years.

In 1953, on the occasion of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of Christian work in the city of Akita, one of our missionaries made the following statement: "Protestant Christianity is yet very young in Japan, but it would take thousands of books to record the story of the acts of faith and deeds of loving service that have characterized the movement in these past seventy years. Christianity is recognized as one of the three dominant religions of the country."

In 1954, a step of vital importance was taken when the World Missions administration of The United Christian Missionary Society became integrated into the Interboard Committee for Christian Work in Japan, thus fulfilling for the former Japan Mission the experience of Christian union which the churches had previously chosen. Thus all UCMS related churches became a part of the united program known as the Kyodan. Formed in 1941, partly as a result of government pressure, the Kyodan was made up originally of thirty denominations. After the war, some individuals and groups of congregations withdrew from the union for various reasons, but today the Church of Christ of Japan is larger and stronger than ever. Living in the midst of a non-Christian population of some 80,000,000 people, Disciples of Christ find this unity with other communions a source of strength.

Churches

Many of The United Christian Missionary Society related churches suffered partial or complete destruction by bombing. The work of repairing and rebuilding still goes on. In some instances new locations were chosen, or one congregation combined with another to plan a larger and better building. A glance at the map of the island of Honshu will show the cities where the distribution of churches is as follows:

In Tokyo: Takinogawa Church in North Tokyo; Koiwa Church in East Tokyo;

Nakano Church, in West Tokyo; Asakusa Church, in East Tokyo.

South of Tokyo: In Osaka, Tamade Church, eight hours away by express train;
Hachijo Island Church, one hundred and eighty miles south, by boat.

North of Tokyo: This northern part of Honshu Island is called "Tohoku." It is the area pioneered by Disciples of Christ missionaries. Six churches are active there: Akita Church, Honjo Church, Tsuruoka Church, Sendai Church, Fukushima Church, and Shinjo Church.

During the year 1955 three new chapels were erected with UCMS help: one at Honjo, one in East Tokyo, called North Asakusa Church; one in Kashima, on the Pacific shore, northeast of Tokyo, where the famous Kashima Shrine holds sway over the lives of the people, like the temple to Diana, at Ephesus of old.

Our Staff of Missionaries and Japanese Pastors and Teachers

Visitors in Tokyo and other cities where our work is located are invariably impressed with the quality of our staff of missionaries. The enthusiasm and consecration of the exceptional group of well-trained younger members, combined with the experience of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hendricks, who have been on the field much of the time since 1921, promise great accomplishment in the future. In addition to their assigned jobs as educational, evangelical, or medical missionaries, these twenty Disciples who represent us in Japan are in places of leadership in such organizations as the Kyodan (The United Church of Christ in Japan), the National Christian Council and Church World Service of the World Council of Churches.

Too much cannot be said of the loyalty and consecration of those who have worked long with too-low salaries and under great difficulty, especially during the war and the period of reconstruction - the Japanese pastors and teachers. Altogether there are 174 nationals holding positions of leadership in churches and Disciple-related schools. Like the missionaries, they also lend aid whenever possible to union projects.

Schools

A recent report of the Educational Association of Christian Schools in Japan gives a total of 93,179 students enrolled in 142 United Church of Christ related schools. The number of students in 61 other Christian schools, not related to the Kyodan, brings the total up to 127,435. These Christian schools are crowded to overflowing. Many who apply for admission must be turned away because of lack of room and adequate facilities. The total student body is said to be only 18 per cent Christian. As long as the schools meet standard requirements set by the Ministry of Education, they are free to add any religious training they wish, and every effort is made to draw students into relationship with the local churches and their activities. Through regular chapel services and Bible study an understanding of the Christian faith is made possible.

Becoming a Christian means frequently loss of friends and a complete breaking of family ties. This is especially true of students for the ministry. One of the results is financial strain. A deep concern for the health of students is felt by educational leaders. Many of these young people lived on almost nothing during the war years when they should have been developing strong bodies, and

they are ill equipped to bear the strain of insufficient food and long hours which necessary jobs impose upon them. Because of lack of funds, buildings are sadly in need of repair; school rooms are seldom heated, and comfort cannot be considered.

Disciples of Christ High Schools

Two schools, Seigakuin, Boys' High School, and Joshi Seigakuin, the Margaret K. Long School for Girls, had a total enrollment in 1955 of 1,949.

Seigakuin, in Tokyo, was founded in 1908 by the late Dr. H. H. Guy, a missionary of the Disciples of Christ. It has grown rapidly since post-war years and ranks as one of the finest high schools in Japan. The enrollment in 1956 is 709 for the senior high school, and 739 for the junior high school.

Educational leaders come from all over the nation to observe how things are done at Seigakuin. The principal spent six months in the United States visiting churches, observing work in secondary schools and colleges. His daughter is a graduate of Phillips University.

Student government is stressed at Seigakuin. A high code of honor is maintained in its athletic activities. The baseball, basketball, and football teams of this school are well known and highly respected among the public high schools of Tokyo. A group of students from Seigakuin participate in panel discussions over the radio to consider problems of Japanese young people.

In the spring of 1954, the boys' high school suffered the loss by fire of the chapel and junior high school building. Other buildings were not damaged, and valuable records were saved. Realizing that, in the words of a missionary, "when a Christian school loses its chapel, it loses the very physical heart of the institution," every effort was made to hasten rebuilding. In October, 1955, what is described as "a splendid new auditorium-chapel - fireproof and modern in every respect" - was dedicated.

In November, 1955 Joshi Seigakuin, the Margaret K. Long Girls' School, celebrated its Golden Jubilee, commemorating the founding of the school fifty years ago by Miss Bertha F. Clawson, Disciples of Christ missionary. The ceremony was held in the newly dedicated auditorium-chapel of Seigakuin, which was large enough to seat the crowd of hundreds of students, alumni, and special friends who attended. This school is well known in Japan for the fine Christian girls who go out from it to establish Christian homes or to serve their communities in various constructive ways, such as teaching and nursing. There are now approximately four thousand graduates of the school. Its present (1956) enrollment is 495 for the senior high school, and 536 for the junior high school.

Not only are the usual high school subjects taught, but by daily chapel services and by Bible classes and extra-curricular religious activities, the students are helped to know the meaning of the highest type of life. The students are taught the dignity of manual labor, also; they keep up the appearance of the grounds and buildings. They wash windows, sweep class-rooms, dig up weeds, plant flowers, and do many other useful tasks. They also engage in Christian service such as collecting useful articles and money for the foundling home (Jewel Pool Garden) or for the hospital. On one occasion they made up a large fund to send to China to help rebuild Christian schools destroyed there, as an apology for the wanton acts of Japanese troops during the war.

Principal Nobundo Oda, of the girls' school, is a great Christian. He is also pastor of one of our congregations, the Nakano Church. He visited the United States after the war. Two teachers of this school, and the daughter of another, have studied in the States recently in order to help the Margaret K. Long School to have an even greater influence toward the Christian uplift of Japan.

The girls of the school are fond of music, especially chorus work. They often sing in English as well as in Japanese. They have several Japanese teachers of English and several missionary assistants in this department who help them especially with their pronunciation. Science classes also are a feature of the curriculum. Athletics, particularly volley-ball, and Japanese folk dancing are popular. Occasionally there are track meets, too, with many spectacular feature races of original nature. The school sponsors outings when places of historic interest are visited. It owns a conference ground which contains one of the finest hot springs in North Japan.

Kindergarten

Like all missions related churches, ours in Japan recognize the importance of kindergartens as Christian agencies. Those conducted by our churches are valued not only as a source of revenue to add to the low salary of the Japanese Christian minister, but also as a fruitful means of evangelism. Parents who come with their children learn to pray, to sing hymns- thus becoming familiar for the first time with the Christian form of worship. Each kindergarten has a Mother's Club where Bible study is introduced. It is only one step further to point out that if parents feel that their little ones need the moral teaching furnished by the kindergarten, they, too, should become Christians, and have the training and fellowship of the church.

Institutions of Higher Learning

Japan International Christian University was started in 1949, when remodeling began on an immense army air school building seventeen miles from Tokyo. Four years later, the university was opened officially, when students were admitted to the first class of its undergraduate College of Liberal Arts. In 1956, in its fourth full year of operation, and offering 318 courses, JICU is contemplating graduate work. The present enrollment is 666. There are 86 faculty members, 66 of them Japanese. The president is a distinguished Japanese scientist and educator. Twenty-seven per cent of the students are women - the highest enrollment of women in any co-educational college or university in Japan.

Interest in the phenomenal development of this Christian university has been almost universal. Funds for the purchase of the 365 acres on the campus came from Japanese - many of them non-Christian. Young people in churches of the United States and Canada contributed more than \$89,000 to the building. Today fourteen cooperating denominations, of which the Disciples of Christ is one, work together through the central agency of the Japanese International Christian University Foundation in New York City, to underwrite the funds needed for the maintenance of this united Protestant enterprise.

There is a dynamic religious program, including a Religious Emphasis Week each June. All full-time faculty members are Christians; twenty-eight per cent of students entering are Christian; about ten per cent join the church later.

The university's farm is the center of an agricultural outreach program which offers encouragement to 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers of Japan, and rural mission centers.

Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, Japan Biblical Seminary, and Tokyo Woman's Christian College. The Disciples of Christ Japan Mission lends its staff, as well as financial support to union educational projects. The largest portion of our contributions goes to Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, which is training about 80% of the new generation of ministers in Japan. Located near the campus of International Christian University, it is the largest union theological seminary in East Asia. Fourteen communions cooperate to support it. We are one of five groups represented on the faculty.

A member of the Disciples missionary staff is on the faculty of Japan Biblical Seminary, also a training school of the United Church of Christ in Japan. In size it is the fourth largest Christian seminary in Japan, and it is unique in being exclusively a night school. It grew out of the need right after the war for a place in which men who had to work during the day could study at night to prepare themselves for the Christian ministry. Graduates are noted for their evangelistic zeal which leads them to pioneer in difficult situations.

Figures of 1956 give Tokyo Woman's College an enrollment of 1,139 in senior and 479 in junior college. Disciples of Christ are represented on the faculty by one of our missionaries who is teacher of music. This cooperative institution in its nearly forty years of operation has graduated more than 4,000 girls, many of whom are to be found in influential positions in the fields of religion, politics, social service, education, and other professions.

Hospitals

An American ministerial student visiting in Japan and seeing East Tokyo Hospital for the first time described it as "one speck of cleanliness in the midst of filthy slums." Again, he said that the hospital seemed like "a snowflake on a coal pile." This hospital is, indeed, located in the heart of one of the most congested slum areas of the city. Its history goes back to almost forty years ago, when it was begun as a venture in Christian social service by Disciples of Christ churches in Japan. Since that time, it has struggled to meet the demands upon it, first as a clinic, milk distribution center, and chapel, and since World War II, as a hospital. The building is much too small and facilities distressingly inadequate. There is room for only 25 bed patients but 68,199 treatments were given in 1955.

Because people in the area are so poor, half of those who are treated are free patients. One third of the remainder are insurance patients, and the others pay very little. Patients have been accommodated for as little as fifty-five cents a day. Anyone who is too poor to pay even that small sum is given as good care as the others who can pay. This makes a deep impression on the people of the neighborhood.

There is an all-Japanese staff, including three doctors, and seven or eight nurses. The consecrated director is also a leader in the Asakusa Church which is in the neighborhood.

Day Nursery

The wife of the director of East Tokyo Institute Hospital supervises the day nursery nearby. The building was completely destroyed during the war, but an attractive, well equipped house was erected to replace it. Some eighty or ninety children are cared for during each day while their mothers work.

Jewel Pool Garden

At Yorii, on the Nagatone River, fifty miles north of Tokyo, is our home for foundling babies. Its poetic name, Jewel Pool Garden, was suggested by a beautiful pool below the grounds on which the orphanage is built. Of the forty-five children in the home, many have been abandoned by their mothers. Women of the American air base nearby became interested in the home, and as a result much equipment has been added. The orphanage, like the hospital, not only has a high standing in Tokyo, but it ranks among the most outstanding social institution in the nation. Both have received special recognition from the Emperor, and his younger brother, Prince Takamatsu, is a frequent visitor.

Rifu Rural Center

As part of a program of rural evangelism, the Kyodan maintains six regional centers, each of which serves as a training point for a small number of rural youth who return to their villages to accept responsible positions of lay leadership, or go on to the national training center near Tokyo for preparation to become pastors of rural churches. Interest of Disciples is focused on one of these, Rifu Rural Center, where a missionary couple from our Japan Mission serve as spiritual leaders and technical assistants.

Rifu Rural Center is a hillside farm of four acres half-way between a village of 10,000 and a small city of 48,000. Judged by American standards, this farm would seem pitifully small, but it is at least one acre larger than the average Japanese farm. The six students in residence do practical work on the farm, learning better methods which they demonstrate to neighboring farmers. For leadership training they work in neighboring churches, and each year help with a "Farmers' Gospel School," when for four days, people may come to hear lectures on Christianity and better farm methods.

Youth Work

The Christian youth and student work of the Japanese church is still limited, largely because of lack of leadership in the churches. Youth in Japan show an eagerness to learn about Christianity, and an intense loyalty when they become members of the Church. Our congregations are made up in great part by young people who take an enthusiastic part in every phase of the church program. Margaret K. Long School for Girls holds six conferences for youth each year, and these are of great value as centers of leadership training. Ecumenical work camps, sponsored each summer by the National Christian Council of Japan, have been entered into enthusiastically. They have attracted much attention and admiration both inside the church and among non-Christians in communities where worthwhile projects are accomplished by college and high school youth. Religious and racial barriers have been dissolved in the warmth of fellowship developed; hatreds left over from the war have disappeared.

To the program of actual work and worship, work campers add an active evangelistic program. Open meetings are held, sometimes near crowded railway stations, with choir, movies, sermons, and witnessing by Christian students of the group. Groups sometimes go out from camp to hold meetings in coal mining towns. On Sundays, campers conduct Sunday schools and even preach in churches.

A Disciples missionary wrote of one work camp as follows: "Harder to measure but in some ways the most important contribution of the camp was the things which happened in the lives of the campers. Out of this experience with such a consecrated group of young people could well come another Kagawa. And we have the temerity to pray God that it will."

T H E P H I L I P P I N E S

The Islands

There are over 7,000 islands in the group known as the Philippines. The population is about 20,000,000. Luzon, where our brotherhood maintains mission work, is the largest. Other communions have missions on Luzon and others of the islands.

This group of islands was under the rule of the Spanish for about four hundred years. Spanish friars took the Roman Catholic religion to many of the people. Some schools were conducted for them, but very few Filipinos received higher education. The defeat of the Spanish navy in the battle of Manila Bay on May 11, 1898, and the subsequent conquest of the islands by the United States terminated Spanish rule.

The American regime in the Philippines ushered in religious freedom, and this opened the Philippines to the Protestant missionary enterprise. Before 1898 no Protestant missionary had been allowed to enter the archipelago to establish mission work. In March 1899 the Methodist Episcopal Church sent the first missionary. He was followed the same year by a doctor and his wife of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. The Baptists established work in 1900, and a United Brethren Mission began in 1901.

Disciples of Christ Mission

That same year - 1901 - marked the beginning of our own mission in the area of Manila. The missionaries preached in the markets and in the streets. Early converts baptized in Manila Bay furnished able leaders of later years.

In 1903 our missionaries went to serve the Ilocano-speaking people in the North, where no missionaries were working. Laoag in Ilocos Norte and Vigan in Ilocos Sur became centers of work. Missionaries had to master a new language, Ilocano. There were no dictionaries or grammars. As soon as possible, portions of the Scriptures were translated into that language.

The next thirty years were good ones. An increasing number of missionaries came to the islands. Protestantism became more and more popular, especially with the younger people. Medical missionaries arrived in Laoag in 1903 and won the confidence of the people. At that time there was no other physician within fifty miles and no hospital within two hundred fifty miles. During this period of growth the Disciples of Christ established some very worthwhile institutions, such as the Albert Allen Memorial Dormitory, Manila; the Boys' Christian Training School, Laoag; the Adamson Dormitory and Girls' Training School, Laoag; the Mary J. Childs Hospital, Manila; the Sally Long Reid Memorial Hospital, Laoag; the Frank Dunn Memorial Hospital, Vigan; the Training School for Nurses, Vigan. They also participated in establishing the Union Theological Seminary in Manila. The Philippine program grew rapidly and effective leadership on the part of the nationals was developed. Filipino Christians shared with the missionaries the dream of carrying the Gospel to the mountain people, and many attempts were made to establish a work in the mountain areas of Abra and Apayao. Results were gratifying.

Then came the depression, which caused American churches to decrease their giving for missions; all the missionaries were brought home; certain very significant projects were closed. Filipino Christian leaders had to take responsibility for the program maintained. This they did with great devotion - continuing with regular church activities, conferences, vacation church schools, and particularly

with the distribution of Christian literature. Some of the most consecrated leaders carried on the evangelistic work begun in the mountains. When finances permitted, the missionaries were returned, and work in the two remote mountain provinces was promoted.

It was not until after World War II, however, that the program in the highland areas of Abra and Apayao became established. Mountain high schools were built in Lamac and Kabugao, promising centers of influence. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that two of the missionaries at work in these provinces served in the Philippines as chaplains during the war.

According to the statistical report from the field for 1955, there were 15 Disciples of Christ missionaries and 157 Filipino nationals carrying on evangelistic and educational activities from four mission centers at Manila, Lamac, Kabugao, and Vigan. The number of organized churches had increased to 108, eighty-six of which were entirely self-supporting. Membership in the churches was approximately 12,000. Forty young men were studying for the ministry.

Cooperative Work

Disciples of Christ churches find strength in cooperation with other churches as members of the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches. At this time, the head of the Department of Christian Education is a Disciple in background, as is also the head of the Department of Home and Family Life. A former missionary serves as chaplain of the chapel built by the Federation on the campus of the University of the Philippines. Recently, a missionary was sent to Nigeria by the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches.

Our Churches of Northern Luzon belong to The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, established in 1943. In 1950, a board of missions was formed by this body, and two years later, two couples were sent out, one to Indonesia, and the other to Thailand, where they have since worked with the Disciples of Christ Mission at Nakon Pathom. These were the first full-time missionaries to be commissioned and supported by any of the younger churches of East Asia. In 1955 they were joined by a nurse who will have charge of the clinic at Sam Yek, in Thailand.

Union Theological Seminary in Manila is a cooperative institution maintained by five church bodies, of which Disciples of Christ are one. Our Mission in the Philippines has representatives on the faculty of this important center of higher education, and is also represented on the board of trustees.

Schools

After World War II, there was a great surge of interest in education. Public schools could not find room for all the students who wished to enroll in this back-to-school movement, and private schools sprang up. Unfortunately, many of these were only profit-seeking and, therefore, below standard. Protestant Christianity has endeavored, in contrast, to establish schools in which high academic levels are maintained, and Christian leadership is developed. This is true of the two high schools in northern Luzon, sponsored by Disciples of Christ. Hundreds of young people who would have found it impossible to leave the mountains have been aided by these schools, which the mountain people built with the help of missionaries. Men carried heavy posts up the mountain sides. Some young people hiked for two days in order to reach the high school in their province. Apayao Christian Academy at Kabugao, the most remote province, is in its ninth year; Abra

Mountain High School at Lamao, graduated its sixth class in 1954. Already this comparatively new school has won athletic honors. Both schools offer regular courses, agricultural training, Bible classes, and training in religious leadership. A high percentage of students plan to enter the ministry or to serve as workers in religious education.

For further preparation to fill these vocations, many of the graduates of Abra Mountain High School and Apayao Christian Academy go to Northern Christian College, established in Laoag in 1946 by Disciples. The president of this college and his wife, who serves as Dean of Women, spent the year 1953-54 in special study at Peabody College.

Vigan Community Center

For many years another school for religious training, Christian Training School at Vigan, filled an important place in the church of the northwest Luzon area. Many graduates had gone out to work as lay pastors and deaconesses in the mountain barrios (villages) and to fill places of political leadership in their communities. In 1953 however, a significant change took place in our work at Vigan. There was developing a great need for a definite social service program, and to meet this need, Vigan Community Center was formed. Academic courses at Christian Training School were moved to the two high schools at Abra and Apayao. This venture of Disciples of Christ seeks to demonstrate the Christian way of living. It teaches good will in a setting where there is frequently prejudice and suspicion.

The social service program includes activities for all age groups, from a kindergarten, on through Boy Scouts, younger boys' clubs, Fellowship Groups, to leadership training courses and adult community projects. The Farmers' Cooperative Marketing Association uses the Center as a meeting place; rural pastors, teachers and deaconesses come for books and audio-visual materials available for their use. Music, movies, talent groups, indoor and outdoor sports, a library and reading center are features. The staff makes frequent visits to meetings of other organizations to keep in close touch with the total life of the community.

While the Vigan Community Center is situated in the capital of the province, it has from the first planned to reach out into the rural areas. "Cine-talent Nights" are a regular feature, when a team of young people with a staff member load a movie-projector, generator, and screen into a jeep and go to one of the barrios. There a crowd is sure to gather to see educational and religious movies or to participate in singing and a talent show. Outstanding performers in these shows are invited to take part in events at the Center.

One of the first steps after the way was cleared to establish the Center was to hold a work camp. Twenty young people from eight churches came together to build a combination basketball-tennis court in concrete. Local people joined in to help in various ways. So successful was this plan from the standpoint of accomplishment and fellowship that a two-week camp has been held each summer since.

Youth Work

Most of the churches have organized youth groups, many of them Christian Youth Fellowships. An enthusiastic year-round program is carried on by the directors of youth work of both the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Conferences are well attended, and delegates are sent to conferences of youth outside the islands.

Young people are leaders in churches. Release from school, usually from March to June, means added opportunity for Christian work. In addition to conferences, many take part in C.Y.F. Bible institutes, work camps - both international and local high school work camps, Daily Vacation Bible School Institutes, and the C.Y.F. Pilot Project. Each vacation finds teams of consecrated young workers, after basic training, going armed with blackboards and other equipment into the provinces. There they hold teacher training schools in order that the more isolated and inaccessible barrios may have trained leadership for Daily Vacation Bible Schools.

Social Life

The established custom of the past does not permit boys and girls to have dates in the American manner. A companion, or chaperone, would accompany them even if they sit in the girl's home and talk. Sometimes a church leads the way for more freedom; many are breaking this custom. Although young people usually decide whom they wish to marry, the parents of the groom usually go to the parents of the bride with the proposal of marriage. Relatives are consulted. The wedding is a big affair. Everyone comes, invited or uninvited. Very frequently, after a young couple have become members of the church, they request a second wedding, in order that they may participate in the Christian ceremony.

Games at a party would resemble those played in this land. They were transported. Musical games, mimicry, and charades might be there. Any moonlight night may see a serenade by an admiring young man and his friends. The parents of the girl may place a candle at the window to recognize the honor.

In rural communities, especially, much of the recreation of Christian youth centers in the church. Religion is enjoyed by barrio youth, who look forward to the period of fellowship which usually begins the Sunday meeting. It is counted as recreation to form gospel teams of small groups to go to neighboring barrios and hold religious services.

Filipinos like dramas. Churches use them many times, as methods of teaching. Youth present stewardship plays, dramas at Christmas time and on many other special occasions.

A missionary writes "Youth manage to have fun in spite of the absence of drive-in theatres and ice cream parlors, and they usually succeed in mixing religion with their fun."

T H A I L A N D

Another Door Opens

Situated in the center of a triangle formed by Burma on the west, Indo-China on the east, and Malaya on the south is Thailand, known until recent years as Siam, but now called by its ancient name, which the Thai people have always preferred.

Thailand is a well-watered, tropically verdant land, nourished by generous rivers which flow from north to south in almost parallel lines. Bangkok, the lovely and populous capital, is located on one of these great streams at about the same degree of longitude above the equator as Manila, capital of the Philippines.

In 1951, the American churches of Disciples of Christ began cooperative work with the British Churches of Christ Mission at Nakon Pathom, a city situated about thirty-five miles from Bangkok. They found a well-established mission. Almost fifty years of effort had gone into the work begun in 1903 by two British missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Percy Clark. In 1916 they were joined by Miss Esther Halliday who continued to serve with them until 1952, when all three retired. Under the auspices of The United Christian Missionary Society, three missionaries formerly in China assumed leadership at Nakon Pathom, assisted by a corps of nationals trained by the British missionaries. This staff of three missionaries has been increased, until in 1956 there are eleven. Working with them in close cooperation are three missionaries sent out from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Five nations are represented in this group, made up of workers from China, Thailand, the Philippines, Britain, and the United States.

Our mission has been called a Christian effort established under the very shadow of the great pagoda, a symbol of Thailand's vigorous Buddhism. This shrine, the tallest pagoda in the country - a skyscraper by western standards - makes this community a pilgrimage center for a vast area. On great festival occasions the city is choked with devout Buddhists and holiday-makers. This crowd-gathering center has given the missionaries an opportunity to spread Christian literature on Buddhist holidays.

Churches

In spite of the prestige of the beautiful pagoda, Christian work has grown in influence through the years. The mission has two churches, one for the Thai and one for the Chinese. Because the population of Nakon Pathom is predominantly Chinese, the Chinese church has grown more rapidly and was the first to become self-supporting. One of the serious problems of the Mission is the lack of trained leadership in the churches. Pastors are almost impossible to secure because they are so few, and for this reason the churches must have more help from the missionaries.

Much interest has been exhibited in outreach from the churches in Nakon Pathom to the villages of Hua Phai, Lumpaya, and Banpong. Of these, the most flourishing program of evangelism is being carried on in Panpong, a town of 12,000 inhabitants, with a large potential congregation of Chinese. Regular Sunday afternoon services are conducted in a street chapel dedicated in June, 1956, located on a busy corner in the market center. A site for a missionary residence has been selected. When a permanent worker, or more, is in residence, the chapel will be in daily use as a reading room, counseling center and worship hall.

Schools

In the three strong schools which the mission conducts - one for Thai boys, one for Thai girls, and a school for Chinese boys and girls - there are almost 2,000 pupils enrolled for primary, junior high school, and one year of senior high school studies. A great percentage of students are from Buddhist families. Group worship and Bible study are a scheduled part of the school activities, although government regulations forbid the teaching of religion as a regular part of the curriculum. There is a great need for dormitories, which would furnish opportunities for further training and for the demonstration of Christian living.

Men and women of the teaching staff of the mission schools serve also as evangelists, going out to villages with the Christian message. They sell scripture portions, interpret the gospel, preach, and visit the people in their homes. Other full-time evangelists have come up through the schools, trained by the missionaries for this special work.

The need for outreach into the rural areas of outlying sections is of great concern to the Thailand mission. In 1953 an opportunity presented itself to begin an educational venture about twelve miles from Nakon Pathom, in a situation where an estimated 8,000 children were without primary schools beyond the fourth grade. The little cross-roads village in the area is called Sam Yek, a name which means literally "where three roads meet." Through the help of an educational officer of a nearby district, a graduate of the mission school at Nakon Pathom, a four acre lot was bought, and a building erected. The opening of the school was part of the Golden Jubilee celebration of the mission. Late in 1954, two new buildings, dwelling houses for workers, were dedicated. The principal unit of the school was completed early in 1956, making possible the enlargement of the number of boarding students and providing classrooms through the tenth grade.

Because all students come from homes which are strongly Buddhist, evangelism has progressed slowly. A cautious policy of thorough instruction has been observed before baptism of converts to Christianity. As a result students who have become Christians, while few in number, show definite promise of leadership. Their witness will mean much in the villages surrounding Sam Yek, where churches will be established as soon as possible.

The Hospital

Founded upon the earlier medical work of the pioneer missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Clark, the hospital at Nakon Pathom is supervised and staffed by able Chinese doctors. The superintendent, Dr. Hsi Tok Chen, received his education and much of his medical experience in Christian schools and hospitals in China before he emigrated to Thailand in 1936. He is also a consecrated, devoted leader in the Chinese church. His interest reaches out far beyond the walls of the hospital to the people in outlying districts, whose needs have become well known to him through his work of healing. He has a son and a daughter preparing for Christian service through medicine. Assisting him on the staff is his nephew, Dr. Chen-Chekling, also a surgeon, who came to the United States in 1952 for special study. The younger doctor's wife is also a physician on the staff of the hospital. Both these families greatly strengthen the Chinese church.

The Clinic at Sam Yek

The dream of a medical clinic at Sam Yek is fast becoming a reality, especially since the arrival of a nurse sent by the United Church of the Philippines to take charge. The eagerness with which the building of this clinic, delayed by lack of

funds, is anticipated, is seen in the story of a work camp held in the hot season of 1956 by students, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries. After six days of labor in the heat, the following achievements were reported: 2700 cubic feet of dirt moved; a useful water storage tank dug; foundation for clinic readied.

Youth Work

A report from the mission at Nakon Pathom stated that "the most encouraging part of the Thai church is its Youth Group," and that the work of the youth in the Chinese church is also outstanding. The report continues: "They are conducting two Sunday schools in out-stations weekly, and helping with a third in Nakon Pathom for an untouched group. They are doing odd jobs to earn money to give to a local Christian who is in the leper colony, giving toward the Sam Yek chapel fund, and holding Vacation Church Schools, as well as meeting their own expenses. They furnish the church choirs, and lead in cleaning and beautifying the church grounds."

Conferences are well attended. The conference grounds where most youth meets are held is at Nakon Choom, fifteen miles from Nakon Pathom. Here on the Meklong River is an acre and a half of land which was the birthplace of the Thailand Mission in 1903. Three years later the mission was moved to its present site in Nakon Pathom, but ownership of the building where the missionaries had lived and worked was continued. In 1953, the house was rebuilt for use for small conferences and retreats. During this Golden Jubilee year, gifts of money were made for a building to serve as a memorial to the founders of the mission, the British missionaries whose retirement in 1953 ended fifty years of service. This fund, augmented by a considerable amount given by youth of Britain and America, made possible the fulfillment of a dream to accommodate larger conferences. In February, 1955, this two-story building was dedicated, furnishing an auditorium, dining room, and dormitory space.

Youth of our mission have participated in ecumenical work camps, and they take an active part in projects of youth of the United Church of Christ in Thailand, of which our churches are a part.

A R G E N T I N A

Then and Now

In the early part of the century the Disciples of Christ, along with many other mission boards, went to South America. The first work was begun in the growing and progressive metropolis of Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentine, now the tenth largest city in the world. In 1906 the Belgrano congregation was organized. At first there were only five or six people who attended but there was promise of the future in a Sunday school of about fifty. It was not until 1911 that a church building was ready for dedication.

Today, there are five organized churches in Buenos Aires. The year 1956, with its celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Disciples of Christ work in Argentina, brought new enthusiasm and a hope of increased outreach.

More About the Churches

The congregation of that first Disciples of Christ church in Buenos Aires, Belgrano, baptized its first convert seven months after work was opened. In addition to the Sunday services, the missionaries conducted a day school which was held in the church building.

The second church, Colegiales, was begun in 1910. The Colegiales Church has one of the loveliest sanctuaries of any Protestant church in the city. The church carries on a very fine program. It conducts a public kindergarten in addition to other projects of the church. Five of its young people have dedicated themselves to full time, church-related vocations.

Services were started at the Villa Mitre Christian Church in 1917, but it was 1940 before a building was dedicated to house this congregation. During the years the church has carried on a kindergarten which has received commendation from the community welfare organizations in Buenos Aires for its clinic, and for classes in parental education.

In a program of outreach, this church began work in 1950 in the nearby industrial center of Tablada. Services were held for a time in the home of one of the members living in the growing new suburb. In 1951, lots were purchased and in the following year a small building was erected.

An important and interesting event in the Argentine Mission was the laying of the corner stone for the church building of Saavedra in Buenos Aires in October, 1950. It was 1919 when work was first begun in Saavedra. The small building used before the new building was erected was entirely inadequate for the program. Saavedra is a relatively new suburb of Buenos Aires. In 1930 foresighted missionaries under The United Christian Missionary Society bought a lot for a church on a neighboring plaza. At that time the plaza was only a sand lot. Today it is a beautiful park with a fountain and flowers beneath the trees. Evangelical Christians had long promised the community of Saavedra a proper place to worship.

The Saavedra Christian Church finds the kindergarten a most effective means of interesting both children and their parents in the services of the church. The minister's daughter is in charge of this week-day ministry.

The most recent work in Buenos Aires is a new preaching point in the suburb of Florida. A house and large lot were purchased in 1956. The building will be remodeled to provide a sanctuary, rooms for the program of Christian education, and an apartment for the pastor and his family.

It was December, 1943, when one of the pastors of Buenos Aires was commissioned to begin a work in Resistencia, a city of 70,000, capital of the Chaco area, and 800 miles north of Buenos Aires. This step was a very important one for the Argentine Mission as it marked the point when the Argentines themselves assumed a greater responsibility in the outreach of the work.

The church which was organized in Resistencia began almost immediately to hold services in other towns nearby where groups would come together in the home of some interested person. Eight years passed - years spent in work, in faith, and in prayer. Then the dream of the congregation was realized when on February 3, 1952, the beautiful church of Resistencia was dedicated. The lot secured for this building is large enough so that three units could be built - educational plant, church sanctuary, and parsonage, with space enough left for recreational facilities. The church has a fine group of young people. An adequate program is planned in Christian education, community service, and worship. It is the first Protestant church to be built in this provincial capital, and Disciples of Christ everywhere can well be proud of it.

Several years ago a Christian Church was begun at Barranqueras. At that time the church building was a brick chapel just large enough to seat fifty people. It had a rough brick floor and a thatched roof. Some improvements have been made in this church through the years. The families who attended come from thatched mud huts without floors. The church at Barranqueras is especially interesting because it represents the first completely home missions project of the Argentine churches. The pastor each year is a student of the Union Seminary in Buenos Aires, doing his year of practice before graduation.

Schools

"Embajadores en nombre de Cristo" (Ambassadors in the name of Christ) are the words engraved on the cornerstone of the Union Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires. National pastoral leadership is of prime importance everywhere missionaries are working, and the Argentine Mission points with pride to the Union Theological Seminary, supported by Methodists, Waldensians, Disciples of Christ, and Presbyterians. No other such seminary in Spanish-speaking South America holds so high a scholastic standard or has maintained so long a history as a union institution. The seminary is coeducational, training young women as deaconesses, directors of religious education, and pastors. All Disciples pastors of Argentina and Paraguay have been educated in the seminary.

Colegio Ward is a cooperative school conducted by Disciples and Methodists. This school, situated in Ramos Mejia, a suburb of Buenos Aires, was established in 1913. The grades go from kindergarten through secondary, and there are more than 1000 students enrolled in 1956. In 1955, for the first time in its history, a national instead of a missionary, became director of Colegio Ward.

The thirty-acre campus at Ramos Mejia has become the logical location for summer institutes, Christian student retreats, church conventions and picnics. These are valuable by-products of the work of the school which is increasingly referred to as "a gesture of good will" between the nations. As young people of many

nations and religious faiths mingle in classes and recreation under Christian leadership and guidance, and then go out as graduates into the life of the nation, there is developing a more sympathetic understanding and an attitude of friendliness which is a valuable asset in an area of confusion and misunderstanding.

Cooperative Relationships

Cooperation with other missions is of prime importance in writing, translating, and printing literature for Evangelicals. The union book store "La Aurora," is the outlet for such literature. Founded in 1925, it is supported by the Methodists, Disciples of Christ, United Lutherans, and the YWCA. The churches receive books on consignment and so are able to make available to the members the best in evangelical books and magazines.

Cooperation is important in program building, so the Disciples of Christ have taken an active part in the Confederation of Churches. This corresponds to the National Council of Churches in the United States. In Argentina, some twenty religious groups form the Confederation, planning youth conferences, radio programs, Christian Education institutes, etc. Typical of its work also was the audience with the new president (following the overthrow of the Peron government) presenting the values and importance of religious liberty.

Members of the Disciples' churches have always held important positions in the executive committee of the Federation, or in study committees. At one time a Disciple was Executive Secretary; during the past few years the position of secretary of Christian Education has been held by two Disciples; in the program of leadership education, of young people's conferences, of experimental schools, etc., Disciples are found participating in a proportion many times greater than their membership would warrant.

A third cooperative organization with wide influence in Argentina is the Argentine League of Protestant Women, similar to the United Council of Church Women in the United States. It was a Disciples of Christ missionary who was the presiding spirit when the League was formed, forty years ago; a Disciples of Christ pastor and educational secretary is its president for the 1955-56 period.

P A R A G U A Y

A Bit of History

Paraguay is a small island republic in South America -- a rural country, depleted of its manpower through war after war in its tumultuous history. In an area only slightly larger than the states of Utah and Wyoming, the population is approximately the same - 5.6 to a square mile. It is a land of contrasts which never fails to fascinate the tourist. There is a beautiful modern building housing the Bank of Paraguay, in front of which one may see a barefoot woman driving an unsaddled donkey loaded with produce. There is the Union Railroad station by whose wall women lay out their wares on the pavement. They speak the Indian dialect, Guarani, and bargain with the passerby in the same way their mothers did, while across the street the latest technicolor picture from the U. S. A. is showing.

When the first missionaries went to Paraguay in 1917, it seemed in every way a very needy country. Illiteracy was estimated to be as much as 75 to 80 per cent. Politically, the majority of the people had no rights or privileges in the government. Religiously, the motivation seemed to be superstition and habit.

Colegio Internacional

Because of the prejudice of the people, it seemed wise to open the work with a school. This was the beginning of our service in 1918. Through the years Colegio Internacional, for primary and secondary grades, has grown in enrollment and in importance in the life of the nation. A co-educational school with an enrollment in 1956 of about 800 students, it is recognized as the best elementary and high school in the republic. Improvements in standards and methods are reflected in government schools. There are Bible classes, and religious songs are taught in music classes. Assemblies are planned for inspiration, and to furnish opportunity for cooperation with community organizations. Its graduates are found in all the professions and many of them take an active part in community welfare activities.

The athletic field is the scene of exciting competition in football, basketball, for both boys' and girls' teams, and volleyball. Track events include an interschool meet.

Domestic science is a favorite subject of the girls who attend Colegio Internacional. In a land where diet is lacking in vegetables, there is a desperate need for these classes where better nutrition and more sanitary preparation of foods are taught. First to lead the way by having this domestic science department, Colegio Internacional now plans to equip a physics and chemistry laboratory. Here again will be an advance, for these subjects have been considered theoretical - not practical.

Visitors admire the copper and leather work produced by boys in the Hobby Shop. The school museum is a source of great pride, with its more than 2500 different articles on exhibit. An annual event is the Fair, when funds are raised for leper work. Students, teachers, parents, and alumni cooperate to make this a success each year.

Churches of Christ in Asuncion

There are three organized congregations in Asuncion. The mother church is located on Peru Avenue, about a block from Colegio Internacional and is a beautiful sanctuary -- one of the loveliest Protestant churches in South America. On the same piece of property is the residence where the missionaries live. Much of this house is made available to the Sunday school for classes, to the young people for gatherings, and to the congregation for the mid-week prayer service. In addition to regular services in Spanish, an English service once a month is conducted for Protestants living in Asuncion.

A vacation church school during the Christmas holidays (their summer vacation) is a regular part of the program of the church. Attendance is always high. The Bible school is graded, and the young people's work gives opportunity for the pastor to counsel with young people and to help them in meeting their problems.

The Second Church of Asuncion is situated in a growing section of the city- Barrio Colon- this is an institutional church serving the people of the community every day of the week. On one side of the simple but beautiful structure is the parsonage. Both the minister and his wife help children of the neighborhood with their studies and teach adults to read. There is a kindergarten, a library, and a recreation program for young people. The enthusiastic youth group, which has an attendance of twelve to fifteen at regular Saturday afternoon meetings, are using athletics as an avenue of evangelism. They have levelled off a basketball court to use part of the play space available. A ping pong table is an added attraction.

The third church is at Friendship Mission. There a group of close to 20 young people gives promise of future leadership. Meetings are held regularly, and several have expressed interest in preparing for the ministry.

A fourth preaching point has been opened and lots have been purchased in the Villa Aurelia section of the city. Families residing in the neighborhood look forward to building a church.

Friendship Mission

The influence of Colegio Internacional is evident in the social service project known as Friendship Mission, in Asuncion. The dedication ceremony of this center, held in October, 1953, was attended by high officials in the Paraguayan government, with the Minister of Education giving the inaugural address. The plot of ground on which the buildings stand was sold to The United Christian Missionary Society for about one-fifth of its actual value. It was transferred by the President of Paraguay, with the statement that his country had benefited for more than thirty years through the mission school, Colegio Internacional. Much credit for the accomplishment of the project goes to the alumni of the college, who have contributed time, skill, and money to the erection of the building.

Friendship Mission serves a community in Asuncion where the people have limited opportunities for education and cultural or economic betterment. The settlement offers such classes as home care, handicrafts, and music. There is a kindergarten, a library, and supervised recreation. The daily dental clinic gave 3,257 treatments from January to April of 1956.

An organized church is an integral part of the program (as mentioned in the section on churches) and provides motivation for the services to the community.

Coronel Oviedo

In 1947 the Pzraguay Mission opened a new rural work at Coronel Oviedo, a town of 6,000, located on an American-built highway ninety-five miles northeast of Asuncion. While this is the third city of the republic, it is definitely rural in outlook. Farmers are seen traveling in ox carts, and the missionaries find a knowledge of Guarani useful as well as of Spanish, for this old Indian dialect is heard everywhere.

A large block of land was granted by the town to the Disciples of Christ mission in 1951, and a community center known as the House of Friendship came into being, to give new life to the work begun by the missionaries in 1947. There the program is planned to meet the needs of all ages. There is a kindergarten and classes in English. A library lends books to an increasing number of people. The carpenter shop is used by the missionaries and by others who come to make furniture for their homes. "Fut-ball" is a favorite on the playground. There is a game room for evening entertainment. Motion pictures used in worship and entertainment are so much appreciated that one of the missionaries is sometimes called "Mr. Movie," and he is frequently greeted with the question, "When are we going to have movies again?"

The church at Coronel Oviedo continues to grow. Some members travel ten miles by ox cart to attend services each Sunday morning. Mid-week services are held and vacation church schools are included in the program. The program is strongly evangelistic. Members accompany the missionaries to hold services in rural communities which have become outstations.

The Jack Norment Conference Grounds

About twenty-five miles from Asuncion is the Jack Norment Conference Grounds, a memorial to the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Norment, missionaries in Paraguay for many years. Jack died while attending school in Buenos Aires. The sixty acres of wooded land and money for buildings were furnished by gifts from churches in the United States. Missionaries and volunteers, girls and boys as well as older people, worked together to clear the ground and construct the buildings. There is permanent equipment for forty-eight to attend conferences, and there is increasing use of the grounds for one-day retreats as well as week-long conferences.

Work Among Lepers

Disciples cooperate with the American Leprosy Missions, Inc., and with the Mission to Lepers of London in Paraguay. The leper work in Paraguay is a service in which all our missionaries have had an interest and to which some of them have given much time. They have the support of the Paraguayan body called "El Patronato" and the cooperation of a group of Evangelical pastors. A Disciple missionary visits the government colony at Sapucay.

M E X I C O

Perhaps you think of Mexico in terms of sombreros, bright and gay pottery, serapes, fancy leather goods, and silver. You may think of it as a place where one witnesses bull fights, watches the beautiful señoritas dance, or tries to consume the hot foods.

But we want to think of it in terms of our brotherhood's work in bringing the gospel of Christ into the very heart of the nation, its people.

A GLIMPSE AT ITS HISTORY

August, 1895, marked the beginning of the work of the Disciples of Christ in Mexico. At that time, the Roman Catholic Church was dominant in the national affairs; therefore, absolute prohibition was placed upon all other religious bodies. This regime continued until 1926 when the new constitution of 1917 was put into operation. This represented on the whole a great gain for the cause of religious liberty, but it put definite obstacles in the way of Evangelical missions. According to Article 130 "Only a Mexican by birth may be a minister of any religious creed in Mexico"; "The state legislature shall have the exclusive power of determining the maximum number of ministers of religious creeds according to the needs of each locality"; and ministers "shall have no vote or be eligible to office nor shall they be entitled to assembly for political purposes."

In addition, places of public worship became the property of the nation and no religious corporation could establish or direct a school. As long as the church building was used by the congregation for the purpose for which it was erected, the fact that it belonged to the federal government caused very little inconvenience. However, the church buildings could not be used for schools or for political meetings; they could not be sold and the proceeds used for some other purpose. Every religious act of public worship had to be performed strictly in places of worship - not in schools, homes, or on the plazas.

All priests and ministers were ordered to register with the government. Protestant ministers complied with the request and continued work without difficulty. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, ordered the priests not to register and not to say mass. They expected that the people would rise up in indignation and demand the service of the priest. This did not happen and mass was not celebrated in Mexico from July 30, 1926, to June 27, 1929. This was a drastic experience for a Catholic country.

There were times when Protestant work in Mexico seemed to be at a standstill but one needs to maintain the perspective of history in passing judgment about the past and present situation. Though the state has held the controlling strings, the restrictions it has placed around religious bodies have been mild when compared with the absolute prohibition placed upon all other religious bodies when the Roman Catholic Church was in power.

With the constitution of 1917 enforced, it was apparent that missionaries would have to work quietly behind the scene. Because of the lack of Mexican leadership, it was necessary for the Disciples of Christ to close one school, but they were able to continue with Colegio Ingles at San Luis Potosi because

the school was self-supporting and had all Mexican teachers. The Mexican pastors became the preachers of the congregations, and the missionaries in numerous ways found opportunities for service.

The Disciples of Christ had twelve missionaries in the field, none of whom were to retire for fifteen years. For twelve years there seemed to be no way to send new missionaries into Mexico. However, in spite of the handicaps and pessimists' conviction that the work could not succeed without outside leadership, the Protestant church continued to grow, and in 1944 a way was found for new missionaries to cross the border.

MISSION RELATIONS - 1956

All our work in Mexico is now coordinated and carried on under the direction of a democratic organization called The Union of Christian Workers. Its president in 1956 is the pastor of Central Church in San Luis Potosi. We maintain our own churches, but certain work is done cooperatively, especially in the fields of evangelism, religious education, medical and social work, youth work, men's work, and publications.

THE MISSION STATIONS

San Luis Potosi

In the flourishing city of San Luis Potosi is Central Christian Church. It is one of the churches which has achieved self-support and is carrying on an active program under the direction of its alert young Mexican pastor. The building itself is very attractive and worshipful. The music by the church choir is unusually good. The church is well known for its beautiful cantatas and concerts, so that when one is announced, the church is packed.

Since San Luis Potosi is a city of some 120,000 people, there are members of the congregation living in suburban sections. Some of these members are too poor to pay street car fare. With Crusade money, an attractive new church was built for them in the suburbs, in the section called La Colonia. This church also has an active young pastor who, with his new wife, is giving good leadership. A kindergarten is attracting many children. Breakfast is provided, since many children come from underprivileged homes.

It is in San Luis Potosi that Colegio Ingles is located. The principal is also the teacher of the women's class of the Sunday school. Colegio Ingles is our primary school, with a long history of service. It has been a source of satisfaction because it has provided for the Protestant minority a first class school where children are not ostracized for their faith but on the contrary are encouraged and taught to appreciate it.

Because the school has a high rating in the city, many children of officials and those who desire the best education possible for their children, enroll their sons and daughters. The tuition charged is enough to pay the teachers and keep up the building repairs, thus making the school completely self-supporting.

Aguascalientes

In Aguascalientes, Colegio Morelos, which could not carry on its program under the new constitution, was converted into a center which is called Morelos

Social Center. While formal education had to cease, Christian character could still be taught by other methods. "Not to be served, but to serve" is the motto of the Center ; in various ways missionaries and nationals try to give meaning to the motto. A public library open six days in the week is part of this service. The physical equipment of the building and the playground is good. Boys and girls clubs are active, and sports are conducted on the playground. There are classes in English, cooking, and sewing. An English club holds open house once a month and provides means of contacting other young people who are brought by students of the English classes. One of the missionaries has open house every Friday night, with the special service of translating letters for people who have dealings with individuals or organizations in the United States.

In another building which was once a part of Colegio Morelos is Hope Hospital, our only medical institution in the Latin America field. Hope Hospital was begun as a maternity ward and still emphasizes this phase of service, but it is now a well equipped twenty-five bed general hospital, serving a wide field. Two splendid surgeons give part time to the hospital. It also maintains a staff of well trained nurses and midwives. Most patients are able to pay all or part of their expenses, but help is never denied when a patient is unable to pay.

Adjacent to the hospital is beautiful Rita Reed Home for Nurses. In this two-story building live not only the registered nurses, but the nurses' aids who are known as the "Blues" because of the color of their uniforms. These are the girls from our rural churches. An attractive feature of the living room is a piano where once a week the girls receive free music lessons. The Mission is trying in this way to train some pianists and organists for the churches.

In 1952, the church at Aguascalientes celebrated its Silver Anniversary. After twenty-five years of hard use, the building was rededicated to the service of God by the present congregation. The missionaries serve in this self-supported church under the direction of its consecrated Mexican pastor. Representatives are sent to all Disciples as well as interdenominational youth and adult conferences and conventions.

Pabellon

Twenty miles from Aguascalientes is Pabellon, a small community surrounded by farms. For several years a Sunday school has been conducted there. In 1946, land was purchased for a permanent church building and a parsonage. The church was formally organized in 1953, and the building was dedicated in the summer of 1954. Youth have taken an important part in these developments. Some of the boys gave their labor, and other young people set out and kept watered a number of trees. Because of their experience and training in Sunday school, daily vacation Bible school, Christian Youth Fellowship, and conferences, young folk in this community have been given important positions in the church.

In 1946, Casa Hogar (House-that-is-a-Home) was opened. This is a home for girls from ranches and rural communities which do not offer educational opportunities. The girls, all members of Protestant families, spend the school year at Pabellon. In addition to attending public school, they have instruction in Bible, English, cooking, and housekeeping under the direction of the missionaries.

There are thirteen girls in the "family" at Casa Hogar during the school year. Most of those who come will never have high school work, but it is the hope of the missionaries to give them an enlarged vision of the outside world.

Los Nogales

Los Nogales, one of the churches, had significant accomplishment during the year 1955. Of it a missionary writes: "Here a well-constructed and well-equipped church building was erected and dedicated - all in one year. But a more important thing was the large number of members who signed pledge cards as tithers. During the dedication and harvest thanksgiving service bags of beans and corn were brought in and given for the Lord's service to the amount of over \$3,500 pesos. But the greatest result of the year's work was the renewed spiritual life of the congregation. Several young people have begun training for definite Christian work, and the church is now actively engaged in personal evangelistic work in surrounding villages."

Mexico City

And now that we have learned much of the work done in rural Mexico, which is truly the real Mexico, we shall turn our thoughts to the work being done in its beautiful capital, Mexico City.

Disciples of Christ have no organized church in Mexico City, but they cooperate with the missions of the Methodists, Congregationalists, and Friends in the cause of Christ through the Union Seminary for the training of leaders for the ministry. Disciples support the seminary with a small cash subsidy and supply a missionary couple. For a long time classes were held in down town churches. In 1955, the Seminary moved into its permanent building which now furnishes complete equipment of class rooms, chapel, and dormitory. Each mission board plans to provide a residence for its own representatives on the faculty.

Missionary personnel is also available for aid and counsel to other denominational and union institutions. One of those is the Union Book Store which oversees the publication and sale of religious books.

Disciples of Christ have made a valuable contribution to Christian literature in Mexico. They have produced several texts for daily vacation Bible schools and week-day religious education story books, devotional materials, and books of sermons. They also serve on the Committee on Christian Literature of the National Christian Council.

It is believed that the seed of Christianity planted in the hearts and minds of these people of Mexico will eventually bring forth a harvest. Protestants still represent only a small part of the population and many of the humbler people are included in that number. However, having withstood ostracism, public disapproval, economic boycott, and persecution, they believe in the victory that overcomes the world.

P U E R T O R I C O

Let's Review a Bit of History

On October 18, 1898, the Spanish evacuated the little island of Puerto Rico which had been under their rule for 405 years, and the United States took over control. When Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States on August 12, 1898, there was only one Protestant church on the entire island. This had been constructed in the city of Ponce by special arrangement between the governments of Spain and England. Its service was restricted to English-speaking people and it was not allowed to announce its meetings.

Almost immediately upon the ceding of the island to the United States, seven mission boards entered the field: Baptist, Disciple, Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, United Lutheran, and the United Brethren in Christ. Not many years had passed until the Pentecostals and the Seventh Day Adventists went to work on the island, and today many smaller sects or religious groups such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of the New Testament, the Tabernacle Church, the Church of the Living Christ, etc., are active.

The first missionaries sent out by the Disciples of Christ went under the American Christian Missionary Society and began work in 1899. Their first report reads: "We are the first Protestant missionaries on the island except for the Protestant Episcopal Church in Ponce."

The Churches in Puerto Rico

There are forty-eight churches in the Puerto Rico Mission conducted by The United Christian Missionary Society. Some are small rural congregations. Some are city churches. In addition, there are more than sixty regular points of meeting.

Churches are crowded to the doors whenever a service is announced - on Sunday or a week night. There is an evangelistic spirit among the people which explains the rapid growth in membership. It is the practice, when a congregation crowds its building to overflowing, to begin the planting of a new church. Thus one congregation which has a roll of more than five hundred members counts as its "daughters" five other churches. In each case, it has contributed financially for the building of a chapel and from its membership for leadership in the new church. One has twelve groups, which are called "Upper Rooms," which it is hoped will develop into churches.

The Christians in Puerto Rico are generous in the support of their own churches and in their offerings for other missionary work. The average giving for every youth and adult member of the church for 1955 was \$25.37. For some families this is a real sacrifice - but it is a sacrifice they are happy to make. Each year the Puerto Rico churches make a contribution for world missions through The United Christian Missionary Society. Many congregations have been busy erecting new buildings or enlarging old ones. They have been aided in this by money given by American and Canadian churches in Capital for Kingdom Building.

The work in Puerto Rico is carried on under the joint administration of The United Christian Missionary Society and the Puerto Rican churches. This arrangement is set forth in a constitution prepared jointly by a committee of Puerto

Ricans and a committee of the Society. This relationship has proved helpful and points the way to the time when mission work everywhere will be done in full partnership.

A mission office and cooperative book store is located at Bayamon, which is the very heart, geographically speaking, of Disciple work. There are four churches of the Disciples in the city itself, and seven in nearby towns. The office has proved helpful as a meeting place for pastors and workers, and the book store has made Christian literature available.

The Association of Evangelical Churches

Fortunately for the Protestant churches in Puerto Rico, there is a very high degree of cooperation among the different missions. Living on an island 100 miles long and 35 miles wide, it would be a tragedy if it were not so. The Association of Evangelical Churches, made up of seven communions, is a member of the International Missionary Council. Each mission board has two representatives in the Association, one coming from the churches, one being a missionary. Disciples exert their influence in all of the council's projects. In 1955, three of the six departments had Disciple chairmen.

A unique relationship was seen when the San Juan church was dedicated in late July, 1955. The opening service of the week-long inauguration service was a special "Ecumenical Hour" program directed by the officers of the Evangelical Council of Puerto Rico as well as other church leaders of the island.

The Association, through its committees, maintains a minister to Protestant students in the University of Puerto Rico, a minister to the government sanatorium for tuberculosis, the penitentiary, the leper asylum, and the insane asylum. It directs the work of the Coordinator of Rural Work, whose salary is paid by the Home Mission Council of North America.

These same groups also publish the Puerto Rico Evangelico, a bi-monthly magazine for Protestants.

Union Theological Seminary

The Union Theological Seminary is maintained by the Baptist, Methodist, Disciple, Presbyterian, and United Evangelical Mission. It is a member of the American Association of Theological Seminaries and its work is accepted as standard by theological institutions in the United States. The students of the seminary supplement their theological training with classes in the University of Puerto Rico which is just across the street and with which the seminary maintains a plan of mutually granted scholastic credits. The three-year graduate course leads to the B. D. degree.

Not only has the seminary furnished pastors for the vast majority of Protestant churches in Puerto Rico, but its graduates are to be found in Santo Domingo, Cuba, Central America, and the United States. Disciples have about one-third of the annual enrollment of students. It is planned that every year two or three new preachers will graduate, ready to enter the regular ministry. In 1956 there are nine in training.

The seminary has set aside a week which is known as Ministerial Recruitment Week, when the pastors of the island are asked to preach on the call of the ministry and to talk with young men in their congregations who might be turned to that vocation.

J. Merle Davis in writing about the seminary says, "It is one of the finest examples of the evangelical interdenominational cooperation on any mission field."

McLean Conference Grounds

Eight miles from Bayamon and eighteen miles from San Juan, the capital city, is McLean Conference Grounds, established in 1934. It has become a center of Christian activity among Evangelical churches in Puerto Rico. It is in an ideal location, suitable for young people's conferences, conventions, retreats, and various other convocations. The grounds are beautiful with tropical plants. Every shrub, tree, and flower typical of Puerto Rico has been planted on the four acres. On the hill sides we have thirteen buildings, including dormitories, a home for the two missionaries stationed there, an open-air chapel, open-air dining hall, office, library, kitchen, store rooms, and a recreation building. High up on the hill is a beautiful vesper worship center under the trees.

Three Disciple conferences are held at McLean during the summer, for intermediates, young people, and older young people. In addition, such groups as Methodists, Presbyterians, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Mennonites, and Baptists also hold conferences there. Community groups - 4-H Clubs, Home Demonstration Clubs, Bayamon High School Clubs, and cooperatives of Puerto Rico - also used the camp for different lengths of time.

The 40' x 80' concrete court at McLean has attracted boys of the neighborhood and they have formed softball and volleyball teams, with the missionaries' assistance. The influence of this activity is seen in the following quotation from a missionary's letter:

"The boys usually engage in outdoor games, but when it rains they drift to the porch of the main house of the conference grounds to play table games. Before they began coming to McLean to play ball, they spent their long hours of unemployment in one of the four bars in this area, participating in the usual bar-room antics. One could expect them to leave the bar to play ball, but when they choose to remain at the Mission and play table games instead of going to the bar to be out of the rain, they show that they need and want another place in which to center their interests."

It is hoped that these boys will soon begin to feel so much at home at McLean that the church also will be a center of their interests and life.

J A M A I C A

A Brief Review of Its History

Jamaica is burdened by inherent handicaps of years of slavery to the English who own the land. The natives must combat unemployment, the lack of educational opportunities, and the practice of witchcraft.

The Jamaica Mission was opened in 1858 under the Foreign Christian Missionary Society. However, financial difficulties during the American Civil War caused it to be discontinued in 1868 for eight years. Again in 1876 missionaries were sent to Jamaica, this time from the Christian Women's Board of Missions - their first venture in foreign missions.

Our Mission Churches

Scattered among the hills and towns of Jamaica are thirty-two Christian churches established by this oldest of our foreign missions. To reach them one travels winding roads clinging to the mountain sides. In addition to the churches, there are eight places of regular preaching. The work in these churches and preaching points is being done by nine ministers, five missionaries, and one director of religious education. One of these ministers, although more than 90 years old, serves six churches in what a missionary described as "active, alert, arduous service." In order to assist in preaching, a Laymen's Fellowship was organized. About ten laymen meet each week for Bible study and preparation and then fan out into the rural pastorless churches to conduct the Sunday services.

Most churches have active CYF groups. Young people help with services. In one church, the CYF group is responsible for conducting Sunday services once a month. Vacation church schools offer opportunities for service. Members frequently accompany the director of religious education on visits to organize new youth groups. Churches are well represented at youth conferences held at Oberlin High School. Before sending their young people to a conference, some of these churches have commissioning services for the delegates.

All but six of the churches of Disciples of Christ were directly in the path of the hurricane which struck the island in August, 1951. Seven buildings were destroyed completely and twenty-two others were severely damaged. Many church members were left homeless and crop destruction cost hundreds of people their livelihood. Gifts of food, clothing, and funds for rebuilding were rushed to the stricken area by churches and individuals throughout the world. Emergency repairs were made as soon as possible, but the work of reconstruction and renovation was hampered not only by the difficulty of transportation of supplies over rough mountain roads, but also by expense of materials and lack of skilled labor. In 1953, an American builder was added to the mission staff, and under his direction major construction was begun. New churches built of cement blocks have replaced the old wooden structures, usually unpainted and undermined by termites. Under this program - still going on - six new churches have been completed and dedicated, and two new parsonages have been constructed. Many other buildings have been repaired.

Following the disaster of the hurricane, Jamaican Christians showed their devotion to the church. Congregations salvaged benches from ruins and held

meetings in the open, or built makeshift shelters of damaged timbers and bits of galvanized roofing left from the former buildings. There was even a noticeable increase in membership. In spite of their poverty, these people have always been known for their concern for others. The offering of every fifth Sunday is sent to be used in another of the fields where work of the brotherhood is carried on.

Work Camps

A work camp held in the summer of 1953 was the first to be conducted by Disciples of Christ anywhere - abroad or in the United States - although many youth of our churches have taken part in ecumenical work camps. A group of twenty-six students, nineteen Americans and seven Jamaicans, in five weeks of work together completed construction of one church and helped to clear land and lay foundations for another. This achievement, added to the fellowship of the group in work, worship, and recreation, was judged so valuable that a second work camp was held in 1954, and a third in 1955. Eleven campers, at this third camp, with their directors and ten Jamaicans, worked for five weeks helping to lay the foundation for the new Union Theological Seminary.

Oberlin High School

One of the finest contributions to Jamaica is Oberlin High School, a secondary school established in 1946. Buildings now include Canada Hall, a two-story class room building erected with the school boys providing the labor, and Ward Hall, a three-story girls' dormitory. The Oberlin church building is used for chapel.

Few, if any, of the students enrolled could have attended school beyond primary grades except for Oberlin High School. Recognizing that many of the students leave school to live on one-fourth to one-half acres of sterile, sandy soil, leaders and teachers work to instill farming techniques as well as the 4 R's. Studies in soil conservation, gardening, and animal husbandry are carried on with demonstrations in contour planting of steep hillsides and crop rotation. Students show marked improvement in appreciating and appropriating God's good earth as young stewards.

Several former students have gone on to study in colleges in Jamaica and in the United States. Some of the churches are showing the influence of a better trained lay leadership. Young people are finding better employment by using skills developed at Oberlin High School.

Oberlin High School had an average enrollment of 68 students in 1955. Among the students were 15 Disciples, 10 Presbyterians, 11 Church of England, 10 Roman Catholics, 14 Methodists, 6 Baptists, and one each from other religious bodies. Students came from twelve of the fourteen parishes in the island.

Union Theological Seminary

The Union Theological Seminary, organized in 1955, is of strategic importance for the training of ministers of Methodist, Presbyterian, Moravian, Congregationalist, and Disciples churches. Previously separate schools had been maintained by the different religious groups and Disciples ministers were sent to the United States. Now the combined resources will provide more adequate training for the ministry.

Cooperative Work

Wider participation in cooperative work among the five Protestant church bodies through the Jamaica National Christian Council, YMCA, and an interdenominational women's group is evidenced by union meetings, exchange of pulpits, radio programs, joint men's and women's meetings, hospital visitation, and other activities.

Cooperative Work

Water participation in cooperative work among the five Protestant churches in the United States National Christian Council, YMCA, and an interdenominational women's group is evidenced by such results, exchange of gifts, radio programs, joint men's and women's meetings, hospital visitations, and other activities.